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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a student internship program available to students majoring in public relations, radio-television, or organizational communication at Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, Indiana, through which an average of 10 students per semester (since 1986) have interned at a variety of broadcast and business institutions. The paper outlines the internship program, discussing requirements, credits, work hours, procedures to obtain an internship, student and faculty obligations, performance assessment, and grading. The paper concludes that: (1) internships can be an invaluable learning tool allowing college students to apply theory and practice learned in the classroom to actual work situations; and (2) a successful internship program requires a strong commitment from everyone involved, and is based upon a well-organized, clearly defined, and carefully monitored procedure. Appendixes contain a list of internship requirements, an application, an internship agreement, and a final internship evaluation. (SR)

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METHODS OF ASSESSING INTERNSHIP PERFORMANCE

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Internships are becoming more and more prevalent within college and university courses of study. They are seen as a link between the academic world and the work world. Student enthusiasm for this type of experience abounds, and companies, too, are seeing the value of hosting interns.

Lynne Schafer Gross,
The Internship Experience,
Wadsworth, 1981

Methods of Assessing Internship Performance

Introduction:

Purdue University Calumet, with a student population of over 8,000, is a commuter campus located in Hammond, Indiana--about 25 miles from downtown Chicago. During the past eight years or so, the Communication and Creative Arts Department, with an enrollment of 150+ undergraduate students, has established a strong internship program. The internship (COM 490) is available to students majoring in Public Relations, Radio-Television, and Organizational Communication. Since 1986, an average of ten students per semester, including summer session, have interned at a variety of broadcast and business institutions in Northwest Indiana and Chicago.

Requirements:

COM 490--Internship, is not a required course for any of the degree options (public relations, radio-TV, organizational communication) offered by the Communication and Creative Arts Department. However, students who meet certain requirements (see Appendix--"Internship Requirements), including the following, may enroll in an Internship course.

1. Students must be at least Juniors.
2. Students must have a "B" average in their majors.

Credits:

COM 490--Internship maybe repeated up to six credit hours. Normally, students opt for three credits per semester. For instance, a student majoring in Radio-TV may work one semester (3.0 credit hors) at a radio station and another semester (3.0 credit hours) at a television station.

Work Hours:

A student registered for a 3-hour credit Internship course is required to work a minimum of 15 hours per week during the regular semester (15

weeks), and a minimum of 20 hours per week during the summer session (8 weeks). The work schedule is normally determined by the agency supervisor and the student based upon student's classroom obligations--the agency supervisors are generally flexible and cognizant of interns scheduling restrictions.

Procedure:

Students seeking an internship go through the following procedure:

1. Contact the Faculty Internship Coordinator.
2. Obtain an Internship Application form (see Appendix).
3. Prepare a resume, complete the application form, and submit both to the faculty internship coordinator.
4. Schedule a meeting with the faculty internship coordinator.
5. If the student meets the internship requirements, the faculty coordinator and the prospective intern review the agencies internship files--the Communication and Creative Arts Department at Purdue University Calumet maintains and regularly updates files on 60+ broadcast and other agencies offering internships in Northwest Indiana and Chicago.

6. Two or three agencies which more closely meet the interests of the prospective student intern are identified.
7. The faculty coordinator calls the agency supervisors to confirm internship availability.
8. The prospective student contacts the agency supervisors directly to schedule an initial interview.
9. Once an internship position is confirmed, an Agreement Form (see Appendix) is completed and signed by (1) the student, (2) the agency supervisor, and (3) by the faculty coordinator.
10. The student can now formally register for COM 490--Internship course.

Student Obligations:

Student interns are reminded that an internship is, indeed, a privilege and not a right. Hence, they are expected to:

1. conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner.
2. consider the internship as a part-time work experience.

3. follow the sponsoring agency's rules and regulations.
4. maintain contact throughout the semester with the faculty coordinator on a bi-weekly basis.
5. maintain a daily log of their internship activities.
6. maintain copies of all work (e.g., news releases, articles, brochures, audio tapes, video tapes, etc.) they have done or participated in.
7. write a self-evaluation (assessment paper) upon completing the internship--normally during the last week of the semester.
8. write a "thank you" letter to the agency supervisor and maintain contact for future job possibilities.

Faculty Obligations:

Active involvement of the Faculty Internship Coordinator is, of course, an imperative element for the success of any meaningful and well-organized internship program.

The foregoing procedures, at Purdue University Calumet, clearly imply a significant level of the faculty coordinator's active involvement with (1) the department, (2) the student, and (3) the agency supervisors. Further responsibilities of the faculty internship coordinator include:

1. maintaining the integrity of the internship program.
2. maintaining contact (through telephone calls and on-site visits) with the agency supervisor on an on-going basis.
3. monitoring the performance and progress of the student intern throughout the semester.
4. resolving problems or difficulties regarding student's academic performance, internship performance, sickness, conflicts, etc.
5. insuring that student interns receive tangible benefits from their internship experience.
6. insuring that students provide tangible benefits to their sponsoring agencies.
7. making sure that the agency supervisors submit a comprehensive evaluation of interns performance (see Appendix) and forward this information to the faculty coordinator upon completion of the internship.
8. conducting final evaluation of the interns.

Performance Assessment:

The overall assessment of interns performance is based upon several factors, including formal (objective) and informal (subjective) evaluations conducted throughout the semester. Normally, the final grades are awarded according to the following criteria:

1. Formal or written evaluation of the student intern by his/her agency supervisor.
2. Informal (i.e., information gathered during on-site visits of telephone conversations) evaluation of the student intern by his/her agency supervisor.
3. Formal or written student's self-evaluation.
4. Informal (i.e., information obtained during the semester from meetings or contacts with interns) evaluation of the student by the faculty coordinator.
5. Evaluation of the "daily log," kept by the student for the duration of the internship.
6. Evaluation of the intern's activities portfolio (i.e., printed articles, news releases, brochures, audio or video productions) submitted by the student.

Grading:

At Purdue University Calumet, final grades for internship are based on the standard A, B, C, D, F scale.

Final grades are determined by the faculty internship coordinator and are based upon the criteria outlined above, under "Performance Assessment."

Conclusions:

Internships can, indeed, become an invaluable learning experience for many college students prior to their graduation. Not only this, internships allow the students, particularly in public relations and radio-television, to apply theory and practice learned in the classroom to actual work situations.

Internship programs conducted and designed carefully offer students an added opportunity to sharpen their skills, refine their expectations, and plan their future goals more realistically.

A successful internship program is based upon a well-organized, clearly defined, and carefully monitored procedure that focuses on its meaningful benefits to the students, the sponsoring organization, and the university. Establishing and maintaining a successful internship program is, indeed, more than simply placing a student with an agency. It requires a strong commitment from everyone involved--the faculty coordinator, the students, the sponsoring organizations, the department, and the university.

APPENDIX

1. Internship Requirements
2. Application for Internship
3. Internship Agreement Form
4. Agency Supervisor Feedback Form

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
Department of Communication and Creative Arts

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The following are the rules and requirements for the Purdue Calumet (Communication: Radio, Television, Public Relations) internship program:

1. Students must be at least Juniors in good academic standing (have a "B" average).

2. Students are required to work a minimum of 15 hours per week for a 3-credit internship during the Fall/Spring. (20 hour minimum during the Summer)

3. Students are required to prepare a resume: one copy will be submitted to the Faculty Internship Coordinator and another will be presented to the Agency Internship Supervisor.

4. Students are required to schedule an interview with the prospective internship agency before being placed within the program.

5. Students must have at least <u>six</u> credit hours of class work in the internship related program. (e.g., two courses in TV production or two courses in public relations.)

6. Students must have the approval of the major advisor and the faculty internship coordinator before signing up for internship.

7. Once an internship position is approved, the "Internship Agreement" form must be completed and signed by the (1) student, (2) agency supervisor, and (3) the faculty.

8. Interns are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and follow the sponsoring agency's rules and regulations.

9. Internship evaluation will be based on the following:

   A. Student self-evaluation (a daily log and a 5-page paper)
   B. Agency supervisor evaluation of student's performance
   C. Faculty evaluation of student's performance.

10. If any problems arise, interns should contact the Faculty Internship coordinator.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
Department of Communication and Creative Arts
Hammond, IN 46323

APPLICATION FOR INTERNSHIP

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( ) _____

WORK TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( ) _____

SEMESTER IN WHICH YOU PLAN TO ENROLL FOR INTERNSHIP: _____

YOUR MAJOR: _____

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS COMPLETED: _____

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS COMPLETED IN YOUR MAJOR AREA: _____

GRADE POINT AVERAGE: _____ GRADE POINT AVERAGE IN MAJOR: _____

GEOGRAPHICAL PEREFRENCE FOR INTERNSHIP (e.g., N.W. Indiana, Chicago):

_____

YOUR PROFESSIONAL GOALS AND REASON FOR INTERNSHIP:

_____
_____
_____

COMPANY OR STATION WITH WHICH YOU PREFER TO INTERN (Describe nature of company, department or station):

_____
_____
_____

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

NOTE: Please attach a copy of your resume to this application.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
Department of Communication and Creative Arts
INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

A. To be completed by student:
Student's Name _____ SS#: _____

Phone #: _____

Student's Address _____

Description of internship goals and duties (please be specific):

_____

_____

_____

Date internship begins: _____ Date internship ends: _____
Minimum Hours Schedule (15 hrs. per week fall/spring, 20 hrs per week summer):

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Student's Signature _____ Date: _____

****

B. To be completed by internship/agency supervisor:
Agency Supervisor's Name: _____ Phone #: _____
Title: _____

Address: _____

Internship Supervisor's Expectations/Requirements (Projects or duties assigned to intern):

_____

_____

_____

Agency Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

****

C. To be completed by faculty advisor:

Faculty Advisor's Name: Yahya Kamalipour Phone #: 989-2628
Title: Assistant Professor Communication/Broadcasting
Communication & Creative Arts Department
Address: Purdue University Calumet

Course Number _____ Semester enrolled _____

Internship Evaluation will be based on the following:
1. Student self-evaluation (daily log and a 5-page paper)
2. Agency Supervisor evaluation of student's performance
3. Faculty evaluation of student's performance

Faculty Advisor's Signature _____ Date _____

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
Department of Communication and Creative Arts

FINAL INTERNSHIP EVALUATION
Agency Supervisor Feedback

Date_____

Student's Name _____

Agency _____

Agency Supervisor _____

Faculty Suprevisor _____

1. Has the intern made sufficient progress in the internship? YES NO
   Comments:

2. Did the student have sufficient knowledge to do the projects/assignments given to him/her? Please explain. YES NO

3. Have there been any particular problems encountered during the internship? If so, please explain in detail. YES NO

4. Have these problems been resolved? YES NO
If no, please explain.

5. Do you consider this internship mutually beneficial, that is, to both the intern and the agency? YES NO
Comments:

6. Do you feel you have had adequate contact with the intern's faculty supervisor? YES NO
Please explain.

7. What do you consider the weaknesses of the intern?

8. What do you consider the outstanding characteristics of the intern?

9. Do you have any recommendations regarding the Organizational Communication Internship Program? We are very interested in the development of our program and your recommendations are appreciated.

10. Suggested Final Grade: A B C D F
(Please circle one)

11. Additional Comments:

12. Please forward this form to: Dr. Yahya R. Kamalipour
Communication & Creative Arts
Purdue University Calumet
Hammond, IN 46323

13. If you have any questions, please call: (219) 989-2628

14. Agency Supervisor's Signature: _____

Date: _____